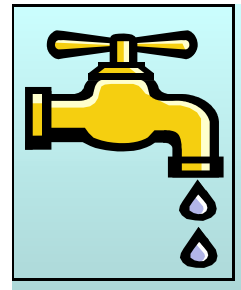


WATER FLUORIDATION NEWS

Maine Department of Health & Human Services
Division of Community Health, Oral Health Program



Vol 3 No 1 – In this edition of “Water Fluoridation News”, we report on fluoride training offered to public water utilities, review the benefits of fluoride in community drinking water, and summarize a period of reporting by public water systems.

AUGUST 2004

Fluoride Workshops

The Maine Rural Water Association sponsored a series of fluoride workshops for water utility personnel during the weeks of February 23rd and March 1st. Stephani Morancie of the Maine Drinking Water Program and Steve Russ of the Maine Oral Health Program presented workshops in Mexico, Boothbay, Bangor and Presque Isle.

Steve addressed the public health aspects of fluoride, giving a history of the discovery of fluoride, how the government became involved, the first towns in the U.S.A. and Maine to add fluoride to drinking water, what towns must do to add fluoride to their water supply, the evolution of the Maine Fluoride Proficiency Program and a summary of 2002 test results.

Stephani addressed the technical areas of fluoride addition: chemical feed equipment types, chemical safety issues, allowable fluoride chemicals and testing requirements. A large part of the technical session dealt with the difference between fluoride proficiency and compliance, including the necessity of theoretical fluoride calculations.

These trainings are held statewide every other year for new water utility employees or as a refresher. Training Contact Hours are granted by the MRWA.

For more information about these and other classes offered by the Maine Rural Water Association, please contact Carlton Gardner at:

mrwa@mainerwa.org

Phone: 207-729-6569, Fax: 207-725-1497, or
MRWA, 14 Maine Street, P.O. Box 36,
Brunswick, ME 04011

STAFF CHANGE

Stephani Morancie has moved on to the Public Utilities Commission. Denise Douin is now the South-Central Field Engineer in the Drinking Water Program. Her Email is Denise.Douin@Maine.gov.

The Benefits of Fluoride in Community Water

Currently in Maine, 68 water service companies add fluoride to the drinking water of 134 communities. That's about 84% of people on public water.

How do these people benefit? Why do we add fluoride to drinking water? Is it really safe?

- Thousands of studies and 60 years of experience show that fluoride in public water is safe and effective. Fluoridation of community water is the number one method to improve community oral health.
- Dental caries (tooth decay) can be prevented. Yet it is still the most common chronic disease of children 5 to 17 years old. Fluoride in community water means a 20% to 40% reduction in caries for all people, young and not so young, over the course of their lives.
- The greatest benefit is to those receiving fluoride starting at 6 months of age, because of the systemic affect on tooth formation.
- The cost to fluoridate community water for one person over an entire lifetime is less than the cost to treat one cavity.
- Every dollar spent on fluoridation saves an average of \$38 in avoided dental bills.

Fluoride is safe. It is the most effective means of preventing cavities for everybody. It's inexpensive. Drink water from your faucet and you have fluoride protection for your children and yourself. These are some of the reasons communities are voting to add fluoride to their water supplies.

Summary of 12 Months of Reporting - 2003

In this issue of "Water Fluoridation News" we continue reporting back to you a summary of what you, as water districts, report to the Drinking Water Program and the Oral Health Program.

Lab Reports

Percentage of Expected Reports: 70.5%

Average Fluoride Level: 1.22ppm

A certified fluoride testing lab must test these samples. Some water utilities carry that designation and test the water in their own lab. For the purposes of how the Drinking Water & Oral Health Programs, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) use these results, these samples are referred to as "lab" tests.

Residual Reports

Percentage of Expected Reports: 82.7%

Average Fluoride Level: 1.22ppm

Water is drawn (sampled) and tested every day that water is pumped. The State collects the results of these daily tests in monthly reports submitted by water utilities. These are "Residual Reports".

Theoretical Reports

Percentage of Expected Reports: 77.6%

Average Fluoride Level: 1.23ppm

The data submitted to the CDC's Water Fluoride Reporting System (WFRS) does not include the theoretical fluoride value of water. As water is drawn and tested on each day water is pumped, the utility prepares a daily calculation of an expected fluoride value based on the amount of water pumped and the amount of chemical used. This is the "theoretical" value of fluoride for a given day. Theoretical values are often reflected as weekly averages on the submitted report.

Operator Reports

Percentage of Expected Reports: 62.6%

Average Fluoride Level: 1.23ppm

A designation of "Operator" is applied to the value arrived at by selecting a sample (daily) result drawn on the same date as a sample tested by a certified lab.

Water Fluoridation News is published at least twice annually by the Department of Health & Human Services, Bureau of Health, Division of Community Health, Oral Health Program. Comments or suggestions may be sent to Stephen Russ, Health Educator, Oral Health Program, 11 State House Station, Key Plaza, 4th Floor, Augusta ME 04333. Telephone: 1-800-698-3624 or TTY 207-287-3015. Email: stephen.w.russ@Maine.gov [Printed under Approp. #015-10A-2726-012-4938].



John E. Baldacci
Governor

John R. Nicholas
Commissioner

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